



BUSINESS NEWS

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February 2004

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN!



The City of Sumter has purchased the Brody's Department Store building on West Liberty Street for development as office and retail space. City officials hope to use the improved space to attract entrepreneurs to the central business district.

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- **Sumter@Six Lineup**
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In a major step for downtown revitalization efforts, the City of Sumter has acquired the former Brody's Department Store building from Sumter School District #17. The property will be subdivided into retail and office space for future sale to the private sector. "We're excited about this opportunity to bring new businesses downtown," says Ray Reich, Downtown Development Manager. "What we intend to do is divide and upfit the building

according to tenant needs. By bringing in a mix of office and retail, we want to diversify the selection of products and services available to our downtown consumers and add some things that we don't already have downtown." The building's location on West Liberty Street gives it the potential to become a major anchor of downtown business.

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Downtown AFTER FIVE

February 20
Antiques Home Show
Sumter Gallery of Art

February 24
Emile Pandolfi in Concert
Patriot Hall

February 26
Sumter Community Concert Band
Patriot Hall

March 2
Main Street Screening Salon
Sumter Opera House

March 5
First Friday

March 9
Writers Reading
Sumter Opera House

March 11
Dallas Brass
Patriot Hall

March 11-14 & 18-21
**"Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible,
No-Good, Very Bad Day"**
Sumter Little Theatre

March 19-21
Scottish Country Fair
Sponsored by the Sumter County Museum

April 2
First Friday

April 6
Main Street Screening Salon
Sumter Opera House

April 8
Sumter@Six featuring the Catalinas
Brody Pavilion

April 13
Writers Reading
Sumter Opera House

April 17
A Tribute to the Judds
Sumter Opera House

Sumter@Six to Begin Fourth Season in April

The 2004 season of Sumter@Six will kick off on April 8 with a performance by the Catalinas. "As we enter the fourth season of the free concert series, we've got the most exciting lineup yet, and we predict a big success this year," says Ray Reich, Downtown Development Manager. The lineup for 2004 is:

April
May
June
July

August
September
October

The Catalinas
The O'Kaysions
Bill Pinkney & the Original Drifters
Big John Thompson & the Rhythm Brothers
Band of Oz
The Joe Pope Tams with "Little Red"
The Fantastic Shakers

Downtown restaurants interested in vendor opportunities should call the Downtown Development Office at (803) 436-2535.



"FIRST FRIDAY": ANOTHER DOWNTOWN SUCCESS STORY!

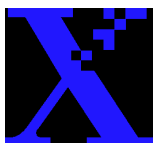
"First Friday," held monthly at the Updown Deli and Brick Street Coffee Break, continues to enjoy tremendous success. The evenings of dinner and live entertainment have drawn consistently large crowds to each restaurant since the first event in October 2003. Downtown merchants interested in remaining open until 10 p.m. on First Friday nights can be included as part of a "table tent" promotion that has been key in the early success of the Downtown Artists Colony. Ray Reich is pleased that First Friday has been a hit with the general public, noting that, "It just goes to show that if you give people a reason to come downtown, they will come!"

EVERYTHING OLD...

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Built in the early 1970's, the Brody's building features 18,000 square feet of space and is adjacent to the newly renovated parking lot on Sumter Street. "It's structurally sound and in good shape," Reich says, "and we have plans to make it more attractive. At this time, we are looking at potential renovation designs and future uses that will best fit the goals of downtown revitalization. Of course, we welcome input from the public, so anyone with ideas as to how we can make this project a success is welcome to contact the Downtown Development Office."

Plans are currently underway for renovation. Interested businesspeople should call Ray Reich at (803) 436-2535.



Printing of this edition of the *Downtown Business News* was graciously donated by X-DOS, 18 East Liberty Street.

Downtown Artists Colony Holds Grand Opening



Paintings, handcrafted items and antiques represent only a few of the treasures available at the new Downtown Artists Colony.

February 5, 2004 marked the grand opening of Sumter's first Artists Colony, an artisan center and gallery located on Caldwell Street in the historic Piedmont Auto Parts building. Approximately 250 people attended the event.

The Artists Colony, which celebrated its ribbon-cutting in December 2003, hosts eight artists and dealers in a unique combination gallery/studio

setting. Paintings, pottery and wood crafts are created and sold in the colony, which also features an antiques shop and framing consultant. Featured artists are painters Jacqueline Knoblock, Michael Hodge, Roberta Williams, Genie Towery and Dennis Snell, and woodcrafter Jack Hurst. Silver Pathways, a non-profit organization, offers jewelry and handbags. Maysfield Antiques & Eclectics features antique home furnishings and what owner Kay Rhoads refers to as "found objects," small treasures that delight and inspire the decorator. Bill Smith, owner of The Framery on Wise Drive, offers samples of frames that can be ordered from his business, as well as advice on frame selection.

The Artists Colony is located at 13 Caldwell Street, next door to the Brick Street Coffee Break. It is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It remains open until 10 p.m. on the first Friday of each month, to coincide with the "First Friday" event at downtown restaurants. For more information, please call the Downtown Development Office at (803) 436-2535.

Project Updates

- Welcome to downtown's newest business, Cherokee Glass! The commercial and residential glass business will open soon at 47 South Main Street in the former House of Lazarus building, which is currently undergoing renovation.
- Sumter High School's "Hands on History" class has taken on the Downtown History project, and will continue researching the past of downtown's historic buildings. The completed project will include a map, booklet and a walking tour. Many thanks to Sammy Way and his class for helping downtown history come to life!
- As part of continuing efforts to bring quality reasonably-priced entertainment to the Sumter Opera House, the city presents "A Tribute to the Judds" on April 17 at 7:30 p.m. The tribute is part of the Nashville "Legends in Concert" series, which brings audience favorites to life in an amazing recreation of the look and sound of the originals. Tickets are \$14 and will go on sale in mid-March. They will be

Project Updates (continued)

available at Seaco Music downtown and the Sumter Convention & Visitors Bureau at Swan Lake, and can be ordered by phone at (803) 436-2640 or 1-800-688-4748.

- The new Medical Office Building at Tuomey Healthcare Systems will open in mid-March. The previous building will continue to house physicians and other professionals, but a sale is being negotiated that will return the building to private enterprise and the city's tax rolls. The new Medical Office Building houses four surgical suites and medical offices.
- First impressions count! Downtown businesses are encouraged to continue improving the appearance of their display windows. Please take a lead from successful national retailers and make an effort to reduce window clutter. Signs, posters and flyers

that cover windows are unattractive and prevent shoppers from seeing display merchandise, and merchants are asked to remove these whenever possible.

- The Downtown Scottish Country Fair Streetfest will take place on March 19 as the kickoff event for the Sumter County Museum's annual Scottish Country Fair. This year's event features live entertainment and a parade on the first block of South Main Street, from Liberty to Bartlette. McDuffie's Furniture is one of the event sponsors, and other downtown merchants are encouraged to get involved with this celebration, which draws about 3,500 people annually. Food and drinks will be for sale. For more information regarding events and times, please call (803) 436-2535.
- The popular Downtown Façade Grants program is back for 2004!

\$50,000 in grant funding is available to help downtown business owners improve the exterior appearance of their buildings. Applications will be mailed to downtown property owners by March 1. Proposals up to \$10,000 are eligible for consideration. The application deadline is April 15, 2004. For more information, please contact the Downtown Development Office at (803) 436-2535.

- A Downtown Merchant's Social was held on February 17 for business people to meet and give their input on revitalization efforts. The event took place at the Brick Street Coffee Break and was successful. The Downtown Development Manager would like to thank the merchants who attended and encourages others to attend the next social, which will be announced.



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